

The phonetics, phonology and sociolinguistics of clitic stress in Patras' dialect (Greece)

The linguistic variable under investigation is the stress pattern that appears on constructions like “noun + possessive clitic”, when the noun is stressed on its antepenultimate syllable (e.g. [o 'ksaðelfoç + mu] = [the cousin + my] ‘my cousin’). In standard Modern Greek, the stress pattern of the above construction is a secondary stress on the syllable that was holding the lexical stress of the noun, and a primary stress on the ultimate syllable of the original noun, i.e. [o₁ksaðel'fozmu]. In Patras' dialect however, there is only one stress, on the ultimate syllable of the original noun, i.e. [oksaðel'fozmu].

In the present paper we will present an acoustic analysis (similar to Arvaniti 1991, 2000) of the prosodic differences that make the above two patterns distinct (i.e. a comparison between the duration and loudness of the primary stressed, secondary stressed and unstressed vowels between the two patterns).

Moreover, we will discuss the theoretical implications that the clitic stress imposes for the prosodic system of the Greek language –in particular, the existence or not of the clitic group (see Nespor & Vogel (1986), Botinis (1989, 1998), Revithiadou (1999, 2002, 2008, 2009), the solution that the dialect of Patras offers, and the phonological explanation -under the light of OT- of the appearance of two different stress patterns.

Finally, we will present a sociolinguistic analysis of the variable, which seems to be in the process of change. Moreover, it seems that this particular change is male driven, and it has started 50 – 60 years ago. In our days, the younger generation presents two clear-cut patterns of behaviour, with the young men to prefer the Standard Greek stress pattern and the females preferring the dialectal one. In order to provide a possible explanation, we will refer to the contact conditions that characterise the city of Patras during the last 90 years (see also Papazachariou 2006).

References

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